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Arista EOS+ puts more switch programmability into enterprise hands



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Arista introduced Arista EOS+, a more programmable version of its switch OS, and professional services to help take advantage of that programmability.

Arista Networks introduced the next generation of its Extensible Operating System, Arista

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EOS+, a platform that gives customers better access to prebuilt features for increased network programmability and automation and custom EOS applications. Arista also introduced new professional services to help enterprises use this programmability.



"Arista is trying to attract the customers that want programmability and tight integration," said Mike Fratto, principal analyst for Current Analysis, based in Washington, D.C. "It's also appealing to customers who are open to SDN, but are willing to pay someone else to do that development for them."

Arista EOS+ gives enterprises more flexibility on Arista gear

Arista EOS+ includes new programmability and better access to existing programmability, giving customers the flexibility and openness associated with white box switches, while still providing access to support and services from Arista to help with future SDN goals.

The EOS+ SDK is a development toolkit that gives customers native access to all parts of Arista EOS, and allows customers to build their own applications that integrate with the switch operating system. Enterprises can use the SDK for customizing, provisioning and network reconfiguration, which is especially helpful for large enterprises and cloud providers that need workload mobility and visibility, said Jeff Raymond, vice president of EOS product management and services for Arista.

"The SDK is a set of libraries that customers can use for backward revision control and native access of the core system database that EOS provides," he said. "We have had customers use and do co-development tightly integrated with EOS, but this is the formal introduction on a more complete and user-friendly basis."

With the SDK, Arista is making it easier for customers to transition into SDN, while still using Arista equipment, said Clifford Grossner, directing analyst for data center, cloud and SDN for Infonetics Research, based in Campbell, Calif.

The new EOS+ release includes EOS Applications, which offer integration with over 20 Arista Technology partners -- including Puppet and Splunk -- to enable easier network programmability, provisioning and monitoring. Arista highlighted two specific prebuilt applications -- ZTPServer for rapid provisioning and Arista's Network Telemetry Application for Splunk Enterprise.

Arista also introduced a virtual machine instance of EOS -- vEOS -- that will give enterprises the option to design, develop and certify EOS infrastructure in a virtual environment first, without spending money on physical hardware for testing. And vEOS includes the same control and management plane that Arista's physical switches offer, said Arista's Raymond.

vEOS will be available for free with the purchase of Arista switches, allowing users to run EOS on a workstation to learn how to use the operating system, run commands and simulate networks, which will reduce friction and get network administrators familiar with EOS, Current Analysis' Fratto said. "In order to test against live code, [an enterprise] usually has to own a vendor's machine, and that gets to be expensive," he said.

Customers will also be able to use vEOS for training on Arista gear. "A lot of customers want a hands-on, dry-run



Putting Arista EOS+ into action

Arista introduced EOS Consulting Services, a professional services group of Arista engineers and software developers for hire that can help enterprises with the development of customized solutions for network automation.

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The new consulting services are a great option for enterprises that may not have the time, resources or expertise on-site to handle network automation and integrations, Arista's Raymond said. "This team can really augment the services and capabilities that Arista EOS+ inherently provides."

"There are a lot of enterprises out there that don't have developers on staff, but want customization and are willing to pay for it," Current Analysis' Fratto said.

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